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SPIDER-MAN® WOLVERINE®



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Spider-Man and Wolverine issue 4

PRESENT DAY:

An unmasked PETER PARKER is being questioned extensively by an unknown agency along with a beaten and bruised WOLVERINE. The line of questioning seeks to uncover the events of the last thirty-six hours.

WHAT'S GONE DOWN SO FAR:

Snatched from his daily life as a schoolteacher by NICK FURY, Peter Parker a.k.a Spider-Man is tasked with recovering the enigmatic X-Man, WOLVERINE from an Asian warlord holding him captive.

Spider-Man finds Wolverine being brutally tortured, the whole thing videotaped for some seemingly macabre reason. Spider-Man springs into action and frees Wolverine.

Wolverine promptly confronts his captor and kills him, attributing his capture and torture to a meaningless dalliance with the warlord's daughter. But something continues to haunt Spider-Man-- why was Wolverine being taped? Examining the smashed remains of the recording equipment, Spider-Man discovers that the camera was beaming a satellite signal to an undisclosed location, and he realizes the situation he's been forced into is much bigger than both he and Wolverine can imagine.

Disliking the violence of Wolverine's methods, Spider-Man promises to help him get to the bottom of this situation on one condition: Wolverine can't kill anyone. Reluctantly, Wolverine agrees.

Following the camera's satellite trail the two heroes head to Paris in hopes of finding and bringing down whoever it is that means them harm. There they get caught up in a dangerous car chase that they both barely survive, but find another clue to spur them on.

So with some help from the X-Men, Wolverine and Spider-Man head off to the Arctic North in pursuit of an answer. When they arrive, they are met by NICK FURY who shoots Wolverine!!

NOW...

The pair find themselves bruised and battered recounting this story to a mysterious interrogator who doesn't have much patience for any of their shenanigans...

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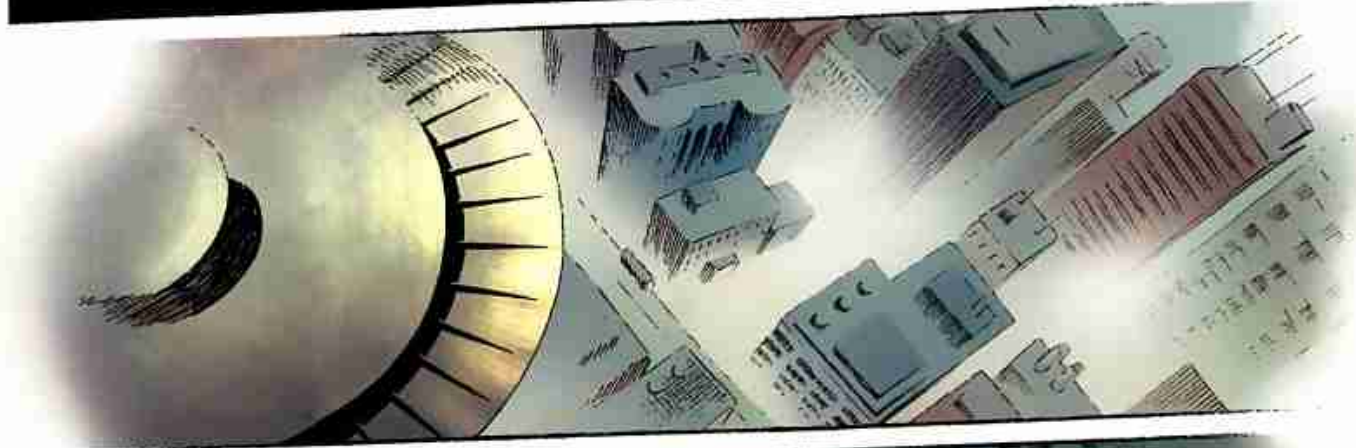
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"Stuff of Legends."

"The codename of a black-level S.H.I.E.L.D. project you two are the charter members of, despite your not knowing it."

"It's also the reason Logan's healing factor is currently *disabled*-- as it will remain for the next *twenty-four hours*, until it's able to compensate for and overcome the formula I've introduced as an object lesson."

"You see, weren't long after you and your kind started leaping tall buildings in single bounds that people-- them as don't glow in the dark-- all had the same question on their lips..."

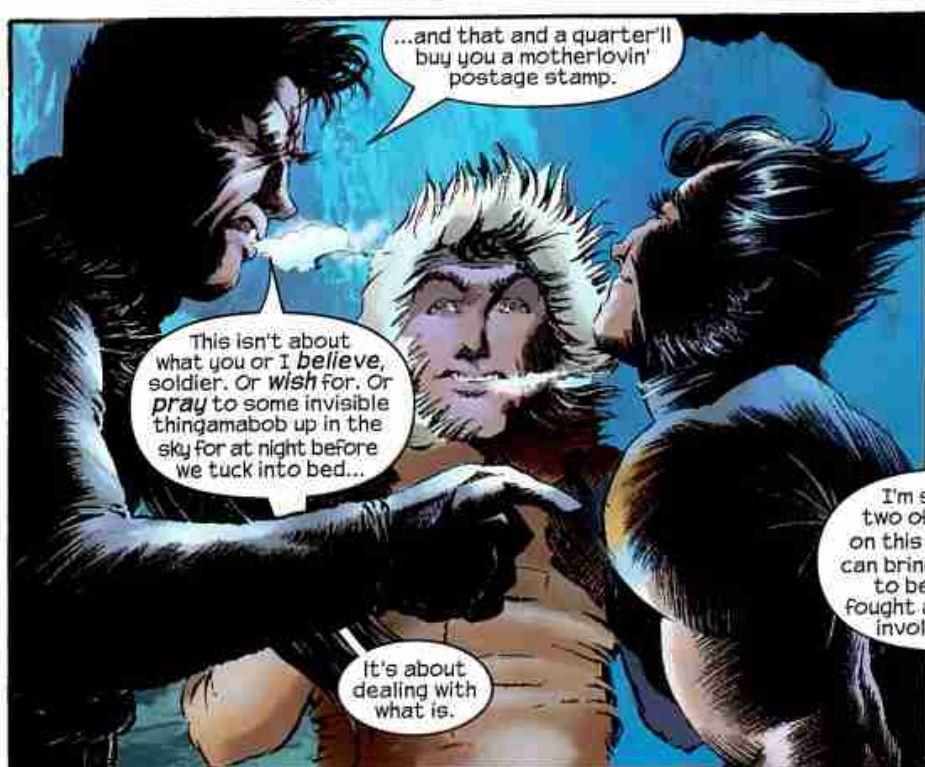
"How do we *stop* one of you, it ever comes to that?"

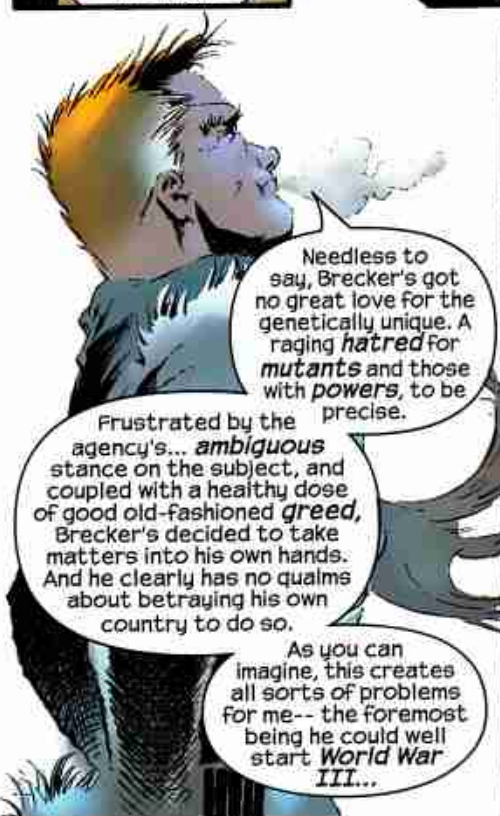
"One of the agency's top scientists-- Doctor Edward Brecker by name, proposed an *answer*."

"The response Brecker received from the brass was... *enthusiastic*."

"Officially on the fast track, Stuff of Legends quickly reached its final stage..."

"Field Testing."





"With you, Peter, obtaining the **genetic material** necessary for the program was as simple as following you around with a mop and bucket and waiting for the next slobberknocker. **Blood, sweat, hair, skin cells**, we even found **fingerprints** on occasion-- you really should be more careful. In this day and age, that kind of stuff, well... it tells us a lot about the man beneath the mask.

"Your friend here's a different case, him being the reclusive type. Don't get me wrong-- when Wolverine does poke his head out of the sand, there's usually plenty of blood to be found...

"...most of it's just not his. Obtaining a clean sample proved impossible.



"But lucky for us, he's prone to disappearing for weeks if not months at a time without so much as telling anyone-- including that team of freaky-powerful twentysomethings-- his whereabouts.

"So we waited. And the next time he went Kerouac...

"...we extracted him.

"I don't know the particulars of the 'mickey' that was slipped into his beer myself, outside that it cost the country a couple **million** dollars to engineer and tastes like **strawberry**.

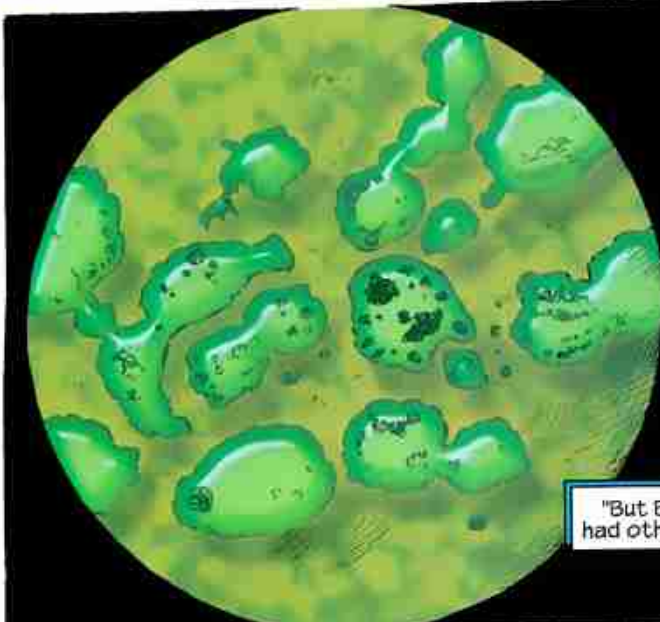
"Breckner was there-- he put in to oversee the op personally. Given his standing with the brass, no one said no.

"He was runnin' tests the second that chopper was airborne.

"It went on for days.

"Wolverine was never **conscious** for any of it-- I demanded that.

"And when all was said and done, his short-term memory was 'scrubbed' and he was scheduled for insertion the very next day. If all went to plan, he'd of had nothing more than a nasty headache to show for it the next morning...



"But Brecker had other ideas.



"Seems in studying Wolverine's genetic stuff, he hit upon something..."







It's about then, I come up with this plan--

Excuse me?



Your plan?

Your. Plan.



Fine. We come up with this plan.

Friggin' brilliant, you don't mind my saying.



Oh, I can't wait to hear this.



First step, we need ourselves a diversion...





WHRRRRRRR-KLIK

Splinter
One to Home:

We are in
play.

There!

We have a
visual on the
target.

Quit
your yappin',
son.

Get over
here so I can
eat you!

FIRE.

PAFF PAFF PAFF

Berserker
Rage, baby.

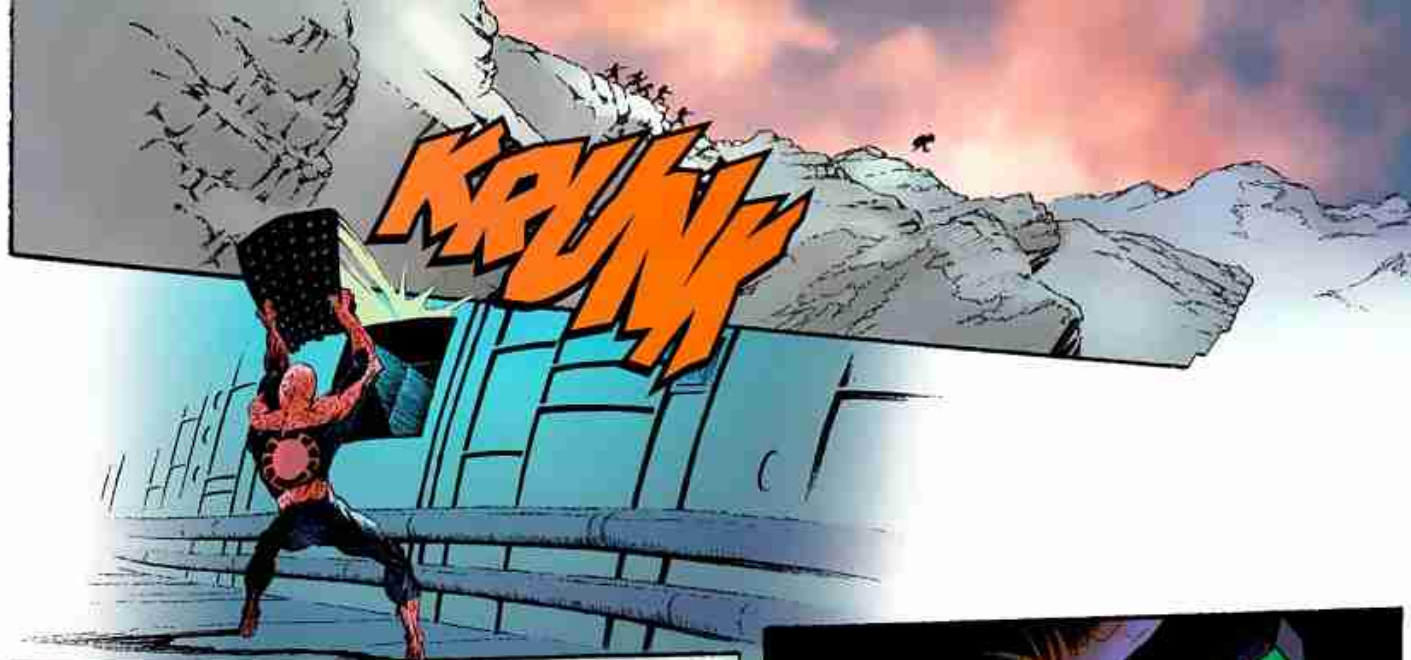
That's all
you're asking
for.

Bub!

Target
is on the
move.

We are in
pursuit.





NUTS.



Game's up, freak. Turn yourself around nice and slow...



Oh, no.

Home, we have a situation--

Hrrrk!



You've made it just in time for my presentation, Spider-Man.



I apologize in advance for what the **gas** this room is pressurized with is doing to you.

As it's no doubt **shutting down your central nervous system** as we speak, I'll be brief...



Amazing, isn't it?

Surely, a man with your background can appreciate the **science** of what you're experiencing. Can you actually **feel** it breaking your cellular membranes down, **liquifying** your guts?

However it was your genetic material came to bond with that of a spider, it did so **completely**-- did you know that? You've only ever scratched the surface of your genetic potential...

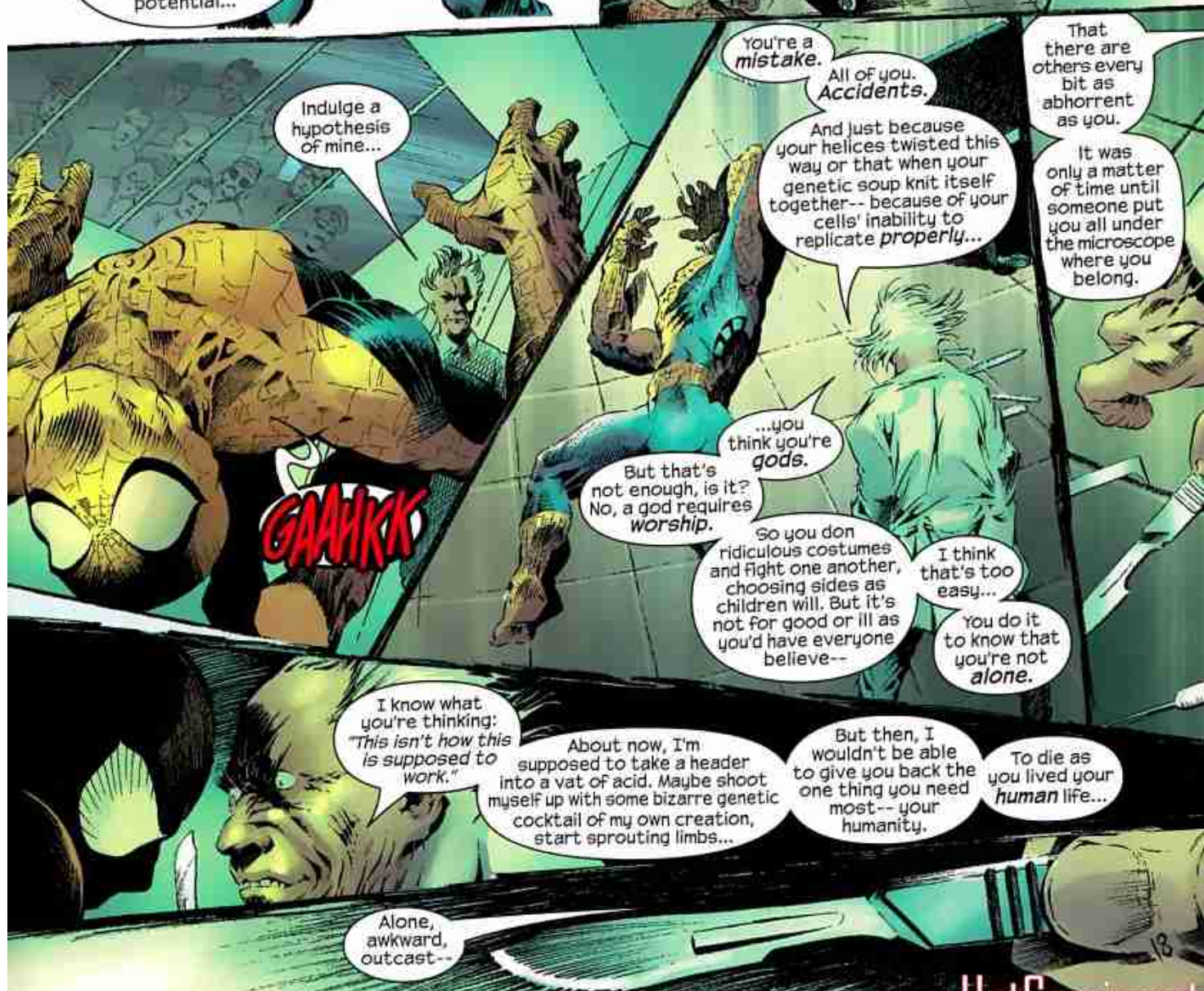


I dug deeper.

And so it is I give you the spider's **venom**...

...turned back on the spider.

Hrrrkk...



Indulge a hypothesis of mine...

You're a **mistake**.

All of you. **Accidents**.

And just because your helices twisted this way or that when your genetic soup knit itself together-- because of your cells' inability to replicate properly...

That there are others every bit as abhorrent as you.

It was only a matter of time until someone put you all under the microscope where you belong.

...you think you're **gods**.

But that's not enough, is it? No, a god requires **worship**.

So you don ridiculous costumes and fight one another, choosing sides as children will. But it's not for good or ill as you'd have everyone believe--

I think that's too easy...

You do it to know that you're not **alone**.

I know what you're thinking: "This isn't how this is supposed to **work**."

About now, I'm supposed to take a header into a vat of acid. Maybe shoot myself up with some bizarre genetic cocktail of my own creation, start sprouting limbs...

But then, I wouldn't be able to give you back the one thing you need most-- your **humanity**.

To die as you lived your **human life**...

Alone, awkward, outcast--

SNIKKT

You
are P--

Bub...

I think
you've got me
mistaken
for someone
else.

Everyone
ain't bleedin'...

Leave.

Lead good
lives.





Please
tell me you
didn't...



Man won't be
doin' jumping jacks
anytime soon...

But he'll
live.



So
that's it,
then.

It's
over.

I'm not
sure what he's
put into motion
here'll ever
end.



A thing's
fueled by *hate*, it
tends to have a long
reach.

Just the
same...



Thank
you.

For
keeping your
word.



Hell,
Pete...

That's
what makes us
the *good* guys,
right?



Gentlemen.

Much as a touching scene like this gives me a great big happy, I'm gonna have to break it up.

There's a transport fueled and waiting outside to take you boys home.



If you'd be so kind as to follow me...

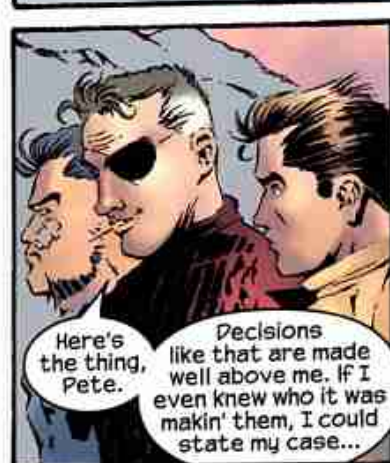


It's a hell of a thing you two did, in there. You should both be very proud.

I'm sorry I didn't get authorization to move in sooner, but you understand. There's channels these things go through...

Politics.

I take it this incident guarantees the immediate shutdown of "Stuff of Legends"?



Here's the thing, Pete.

Decisions like that are made well above me. If I even knew who it was makin' them, I could state my case...



But you guys have done me a solid, here, and I give you my word--



--I'll see what I can do.



Anything else I can do you for?

Well, now that you mention it...



I feel better already.

Pete, we land, you and I are gonna have a poe

My treat.

--and so we hop on this plane-like thing and fly halfway around the world without a movie and the turbulence sucks and my costume smells like him now, but we finally make it back to New York.



Mind you, all this stuff with Fury happened in the last--



Judging by my youthful complexion, I'd say about twenty-four hours now.



Right.

So we go to get that drink at which point I realize I have no idea what day it is, much less the time.

And when I find out we run-- and I mean *run*-- over here just as fast as we can.



Ain't ever seen the boy move so fast.

I've seen him *shot at*, mind you.



And the bottom line is-- I still screwed up.

I tried so hard this time but stuff just... happened. Like it always does. And I know it sounds lame, but really, it was beyond my control.

But that doesn't matter. What does is this:

I'm really, really sorry.



And not a second too soon...







MEGANUBIS

